

JAMES E. "JIM" KING, JR.  
President

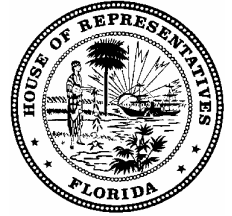


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**OPC Files Appeal with Florida Supreme Court Concerning Telephone Rate Increase**

**TALLAHASSEE**—Today Public Counsel Harold McLean, along with Attorney General Charlie Crist, filed an appeal of a Florida Public Service Commission order granting petitions by BellSouth, Verizon, and Sprint that would raise local telephone rates by \$344.3 million per year. The appeal to the Florida Supreme Court automatically suspends the PSC's order while it is being reviewed by the court.